



GAIL FARBER, Director

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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IN REPLY PLEASE

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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Gail Farber *Gail Farber*
Director of Public Works

BOARD MOTION OF JULY 1, 2014, AGENDA ITEM 44-A

On July 1, 2014, the Board instructed the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Public Works, in consultation with County Counsel, to review the County's safety and emergency response protocols and procedures during landscape maintenance operations adjacent to bike paths and similar areas open to the public and immediately address and correct potential problems or deficiencies. The Board also instructed us to assess and strengthen those safety and emergency response procedures and report back in 60 days.

In preparing the attached report, we performed an internal review of Public Works procedures. We also contacted County Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Beaches and Harbors; and other nearby agencies, such as the City of Los Angeles, Orange County Flood Control District, and Caltrans to determine their safety and emergency response procedures during landscape maintenance operations.

If you have any questions, you or your staff may contact Gary Hildebrand at (626) 458-4012 or ghildeb@dpw.lacounty.gov.

SR:sg

H/FLDHOME/SGARCIA/MEMOS/BOARD MOTION JULY 1

Attach.

cc: Chief Executive Office (Rita Robinson)
County Counsel (Rosa Linda Cruz, Mark Yanai)
Department of Beaches and Harbors (John Kelly)
Department of Parks and Recreation (Kathy King, Robert Maycumber)

BOARD MOTION OF JULY 1, 2014, AGENDA ITEM 44-A REPORT

On July 1, 2014, the Board instructed the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Public Works to (1) review the County's protocols and procedures to address safety and emergency response on and adjacent to County property and areas where the County has jurisdictional control, including bike paths, bikeways, pedestrian paths, and trails, to immediately address and correct potential problems or deficiencies; (2) in consultation with County Counsel prepare an assessment of, and a strategy to develop and strengthen, existing County protocols and procedures to safeguard the public from harm and to respond to emergencies during landscape maintenance operations on County property and areas where the County has jurisdictional control, particularly along and adjacent to County bike paths, bikeways, pedestrian paths, and trails; and (3) in conjunction with County Counsel, report back to the Board in 60 days with our findings and recommendations.

1. Background

The County performs landscape maintenance services along many miles of flood control channels and roads, in many parks, and other facilities. These services are performed by County employees and by contractors. The amount of contract work varies by County Department. The County has a strong culture of safety and our policies and procedures emphasize doing work in a safe way to protect employees, contractors, and the public. County crews are well trained in safety practices and strive to perform services in a professional and timely manner. We conduct numerous and frequent safety trainings for our crews. County employees are to take appropriate action to perform their assigned duties as required by CSR 18.031. In emergency situations, protocols for our employees are that they call emergency services, central communications, and their supervisor when they encounter an emergency situation.

The public's use of County bike paths, bikeways, pedestrian paths, and trails does involve some inherent risk such as trips and falls, collision with other users, and interaction with insects and animals. We have a very low incidence of the public being injured during landscape maintenance work.

a) Existing County Procedures

We reviewed Department of Public Works, Department of Parks and Recreation, and Department of Beaches and Harbors contract scopes of work. The safety provisions are similar among the contracts and require the contractor to maintain a safe workplace and shut down operations if necessary to provide public safety. The contracts require a designated project safety official who is responsible for overall project safety. The contracts have particular language placing special emphasis on public safety for projects adjacent to bike paths and sidewalks.

Emergency response procedures among the three Departments are generally similar with minor differences. There are provisions requiring the contractor to contact

emergency medical services for ill or injured members of the public and to provide an incident report. Safety provisions require the contractor to perform their work in a safe manner, conforming to CalOSHA regulations, and to direct the public away from the work area. The contractor must notify the contract manager when unsafe conditions requiring major correction are found.

County crews must follow CalOSHA safety rules and regulations and various Department safety directives when performing work. For the purposes of this report, we are including a description of Administrative Directives and Safety Directives followed by Public Works employees:

- Public Works Administrative Directive (AD) A137 Employee Rules, Section A137.4 Public Relations, requires employees to present themselves in a positive public image and to be courteous and business-like in their actions with the public.
- Public Works Safety Directive (SD) G106 Code of Safe Practices provides for procedures to create a safe work environment and to comply with CalOSHA Construction Safety Orders Title 8, Section 1509(b). G106.3.1 requires employees to be trained on the hazards of their work before starting. G106.3.2 requires employees to inspect the worksite to identify and eliminate potential hazards and report unsafe conditions. G106.4.2 contains provisions on how to work in areas where dangerous insects and Africanized Bees may be present. The procedures include notifying a supervisor, calling Vector Control, and using personal protective equipment.
- Public Works SD G106.4.12 contains the Traffic Safety Program. Vehicular traffic control is required to follow Caltrans' Manual of Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Zones. Public Works uses these requirements to implement traffic control on public roads as well as on bikeways. Traffic control plans are designed for the specific use and site conditions. Employees receive training in how to design and implement traffic control.
- Public Works SD G106.9 requires supervisors to know the location of the nearest emergency medical services to the jobsite in case of accident or injury. One employee is required to be trained in First Aid procedures and have a First Aid Kit on each jobsite. G106.9.2 instructs employees to call 911 in case of an emergency at their work location.
- Public Works SDs G107 Tailgate Safety Meetings and G108 Supervisor Safety Meeting require managers, supervisors, and employees to conduct or participate in regularly scheduled safety meetings and safety tailgate training sessions throughout the year. Topics include the various safety directives discussed above. Accidents and workplace injuries are also reviewed at these safety and tailgate meetings and corrective actions are discussed.

Following these types of safety directives provides for a safe working environment for the employees and provides notice to the public of the worksite. By practice, County crews place signs, cones, flags, and tape as necessary, depending on the work proximity to the bike path, to keep the public out of the work area. The crews may also use flags and/or signs to direct the public away from the work area. The bike path is closed at the nearest gates if the work requires it. Circumstances requiring closure may typically involve use of heavy machinery, large haul trucks, and tree trimming on/or very near the bike path.

b) Nearby Agency Procedures

Our review generally indicates that other nearby agencies have similar procedures and protocols to the County's.

- Orange County Flood Control District has similar contract provisions. Their contractors are required to maintain a safe work area for both their employees and the public. Both their own employees and contractors generally do not shut down the bike path for routine operations unless they must for the particular work. They use cones, tape, and flaggers for emergency shutdowns when needed.
- The City of Los Angeles uses only contractors for their bike path maintenance. They generally try to keep the bike path open during landscape maintenance operations. When they must close the bike path, they provide a detour route around the closure. For emergencies, the contractors are to contact City staff.
- Caltrans' standard practice is to protect their employees and the public during their operations. They typically call the California Highway Patrol, 911, and their communications center to report emergencies.

2. Recommendations

Our review found there are existing procedures and training that address public safety and emergency response among County crews. However, to strengthen existing County protocols and procedures to better safeguard the public from harm during landscape maintenance operations, we recommend the following:

1. For County Departments who perform landscape maintenance using contractors, that they incorporate the following provisions not already contained in their existing contracts. Those provisions can include:
 - Perform a pre-work survey to identify potential safety issues and, if any are found, address them before work starts; if any hazards are found, the contractor will report to the County's contract manager; if the hazards are potentially harmful or pose imminent risk to the public, contact emergency services. When the emergency involves injury to a member of the public, contact emergency services; stay with the injured person until help arrives if doing so does not pose a risk to the contractor, and direct emergency services

to the injured person, if practical; secure the site and bike path to restrict the public from going through the area; close the bike path gates at the nearest street intersections or entry points and place the appropriate signs and personnel as needed; have a list of emergency contacts with notification protocols; file an appropriate form to document the incident and injuries to the public and transmit the forms to the appropriate County contract manager for follow up. The contractor shall submit a project safety plan and provide training to their employees on the above provisions.

- The County Department will be responsible to enforce the contract safety provisions. Enforcement will occur in the field by the inspector and in the office by the contract manager.
2. For County field crews, develop and implement a tailgate safety training session that specifically covers protecting the public while performing maintenance work. The actions to be covered include:
- Perform a pre-work survey to identify potential safety issues and, if any are found, address them before work starts; if any hazards are found, report them to a supervisor; if the hazards are potentially harmful or pose imminent risk to the public, contact emergency services. When the emergency involves injury to a member of the public, contact emergency services; stay with the injured person until help arrives, if doing so does not pose a risk to the crew, and direct emergency services to the injured person if practical; secure the site and bike path to restrict the public from going through the area; close the bike path gates at the nearest street intersections or entry points, and place the appropriate signs and personnel as needed; have a list of emergency contacts with notification protocols; file an appropriate form to document the incident and injuries to the public and transmit the forms to the appropriate County representative.